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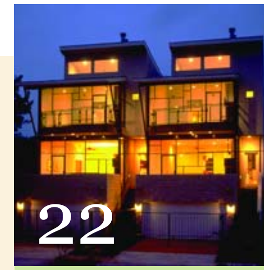

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features

On the Cover

Houston architect Natalye Appel's new home for Mark and Wanda Cohen in the Heights will be on the AIA Home Tour this month. Dining table is by Texas Tuscan Furniture; the chandelier is from Eclectic Home on 19th St. in the Heights. See Page 32.

Photography by Ralph Smith





editor's note

A custom home designed by a skillful architect sensitive to a homeowner's needs is a joy to behold. This month is your chance to tour a dozen of Houston's newest and best architect-designed residences during the American Institute of Architects Home Tour Oct. 10 and 11. The tour reflects several trends in modern home-building.

All the houses are inside the Loop, where housing prices have held their value relatively well in the economic downturn. Houstonians are building fine urban houses on infill lots to live closer to work in the city's center and to be closer to cultural and recreational activities. Many of the homes are purposely located within easy walking distance to public transportation or bike routes. As energy prices rise, shorter commutes are desirable.

Ranging in size from about 2,500 square feet to 6,500 square feet, the AIA tour homes are representative of the sizes being built in the center of our city. There's an emphasis on quality, not size, that I find refreshing. These tour homes are relatively modest in size compared to the 10,000- to 15,000-square-foot McMansions so popular only two years ago.

Most of the homes are designed with energy savings and sustainable building practices in mind. Please promise me you will go see the solar powered house by Adams Architects at 3319 Virginia St. Solar panels on the roof of this beautiful house provide all the energy this house needs, including air conditioning, and even feed excess electricity back into the power grid. As if that's not enough, the roof collects rainwater and stores it in a cistern under the house, providing all the water for the house, including drinking water.

The AIA tour house featured in our cover story is notable for the way it melds indoors and outdoors. Natalye Appel and her team created a gorgeous house for homeowners Mark and Wanda Cohen, but all those windows needed a spectacular view. Upstairs, they've got views galore, but downstairs, they needed a very special landscape. Natalye knew that, and gave the Cohens the names of several landscape designers to choose from. The Cohens chose Houston landscape designer Rita Hodge of rHfactor. I've been a fan of hers for years and am so glad we can show you her work in our pages this month. The blend of Rita's landscape, Natalye's architecture and designer Jane Schwarz's interiors in the Cohen house is one of those very happy, perfect collaborations that you just need to see in person to believe. What bliss just to step inside that house and mosy around the gardens.

Speaking of gardens and landscape, one of my favorite garden events is the Garden Club of Houston's Bulb and Plant Mart, Oct. 8 – 10. See our home tours listing for more information. Houston gardeners grow unique plants specifically for this market.

See you out and about in October.

Linda Barth

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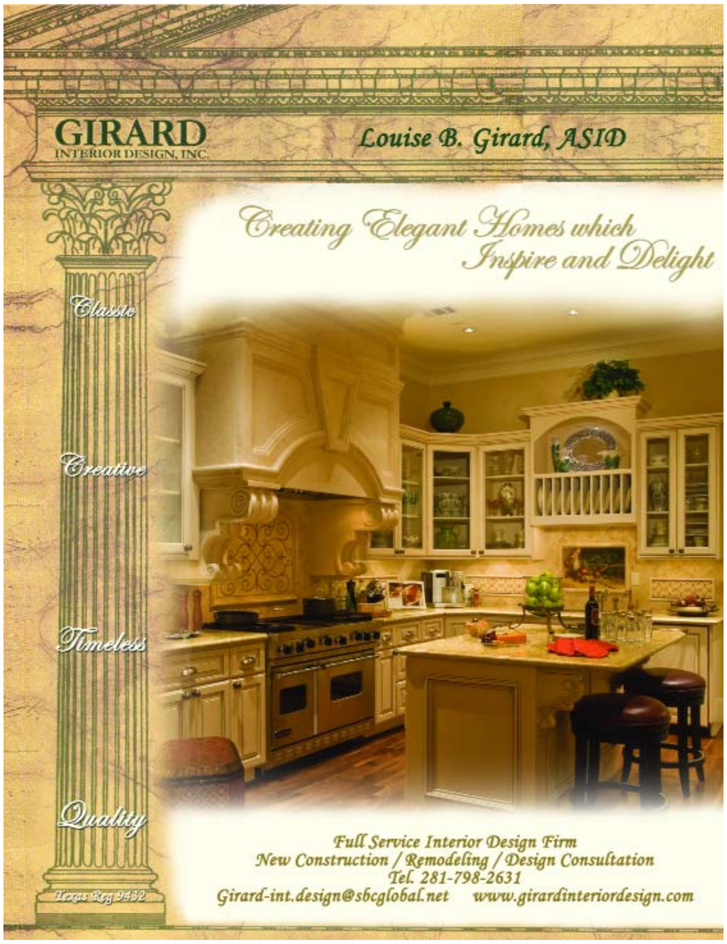
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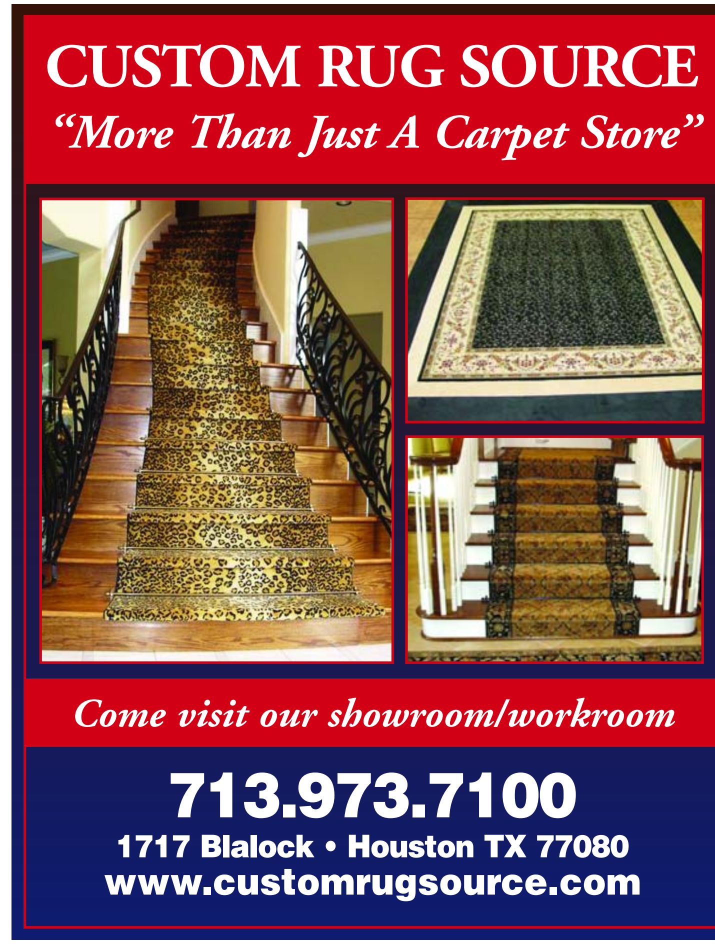
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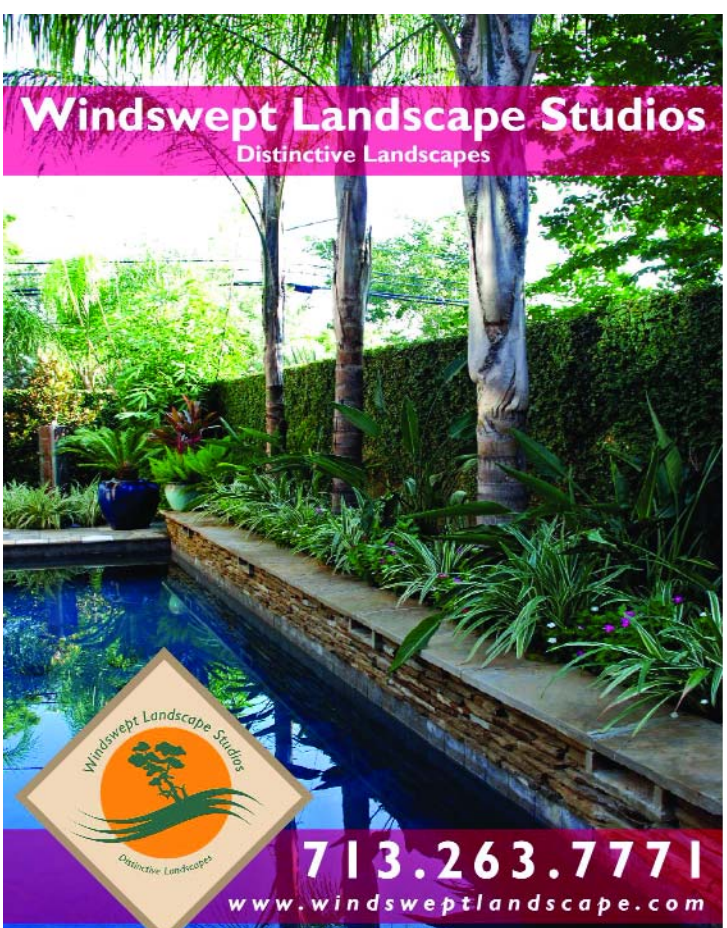
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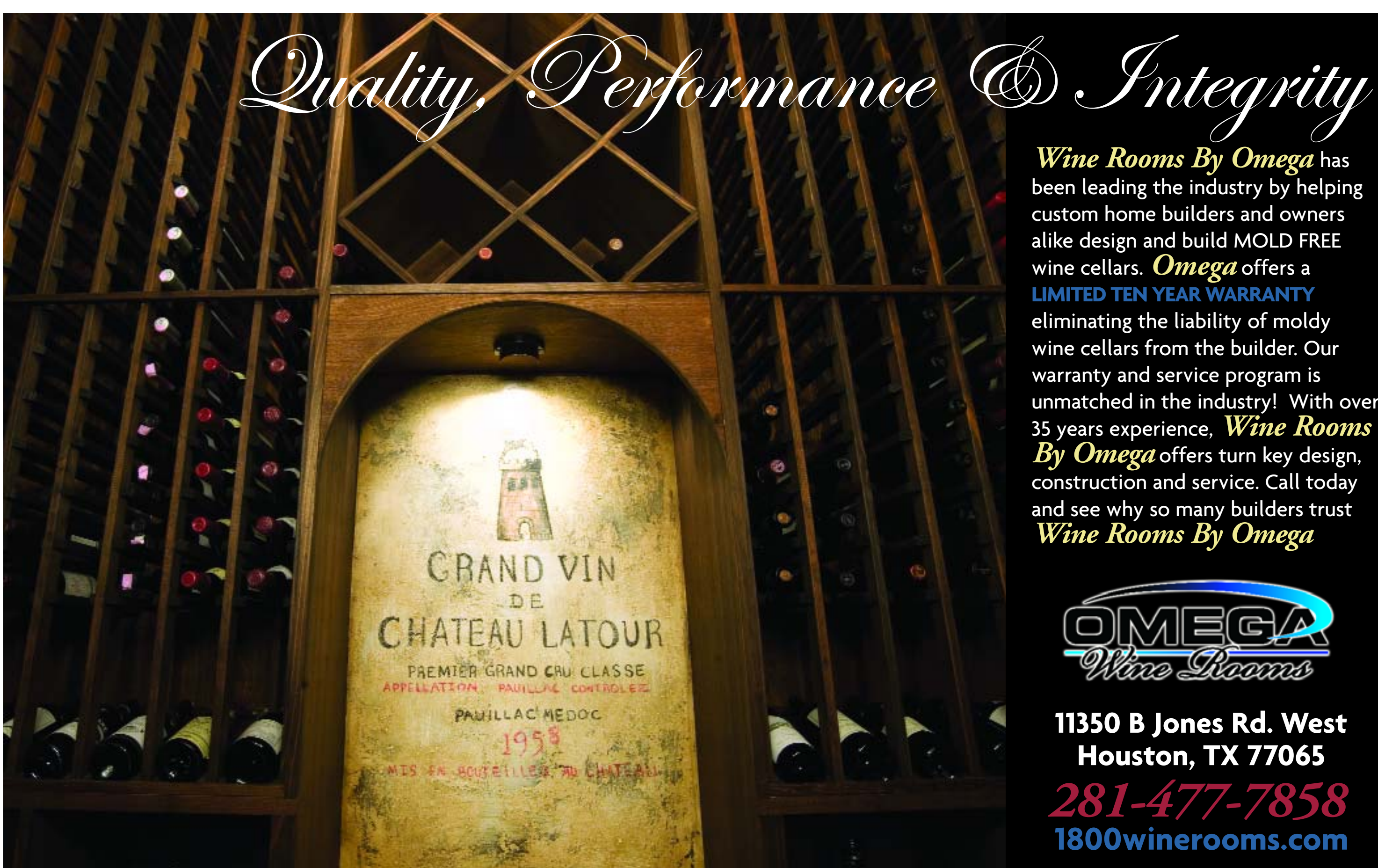

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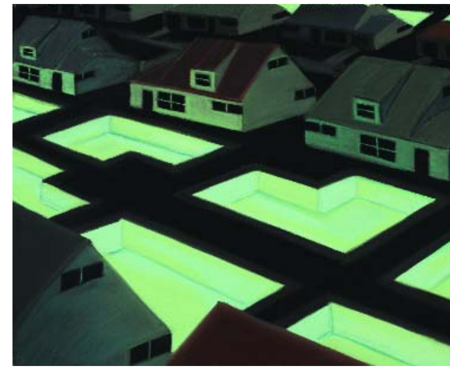

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Michael Wommack's "Song of the Katydid," one of a series of pastels to be shown at Bayou City Art Festival, references the artist's upbringing in Levittown, Penn., where the homes are uniform and symmetrical and often have backyard pools.

LEFT: *Happyville by Perry House opens at Nau-Haus Art Space.*

home show & tours

The American Institute of Architects Houston Home Tour, Oct. 10-11 features 12 homes. Please see Page 22.

Galveston's first **East End Garden Tour** is Oct. 10-11. Please see Page 24.

exhibits

The Laura U Collection, 1840 Westheimer, in conjunction with Gallery Trinity Tokyo presents **Quiet Power**, original works from Tokyo, Oct. 14 through Nov. 28. Partial proceeds of Quiet Power will benefit the Asia Society Texas Center Asia House Capital Campaign. Information: 713.522.0855 or www.laurau.com

On Oct. 17, Nau-Haus Art Space, 223 East 11th St., opens **Happyville**, a collection of Houston artist Perry House's latest paintings which explore the fleeting nature of happiness. The gallery is open Noon to 5 p.m. on weekends. Information: 713.931.9722.

Arts of Ancient Viet Nam: From River Plain to Open Sea at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 5601 Main St., presents archeological finds that reveal the rich history of Viet Nam's role as the commercial hub linking the river plains that flow through Vietnam, China, Laos and Cambodia with the open sea. Information: 713.639.7300 or www.mfah.org

At the Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross, **Joaquín Torres-García: Constructing Abstraction with Wood** is an exploration of the artist's wooden constructions known as maderas. The show includes oil paintings and a few drawings by the Uruguayan-born artist who exhibited with the most famous 20th-century artists of his time. Information: 713.525.9400 or www.menil.org

In concert with the Menil's Torres-Garcia show, the MFAH presents **Joaquin Torres-Garcia: Paintings in Houston Collections** through Nov. 29.

events

Mark your calendar for **Antiques by the Bay,** Nov. 5-8, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., at the Jimmie Walker Community Center, 800 Harris, in the heart of Kemah, Tex., between Highway 146 and Galveston Bay. From fine European antiques, to Native American jewelry to American primitives, you're sure to find something original for your hearth and home. Information: www.antiquesbythebaykemah.com

At Discovery Green park downtown, 1500 McKinney St., Oct. 9 through Dec. 31 see **Cool Globes: Hot Ideas for a Cool Planet,** an installation of 50 globes by local and international artists that depict everyday solutions for global warming. Information: www.discoverygreen.com or www.coolglobes.com

The **Bayou City Art Festival** Oct. 10 and 11 downtown features 300 juried artists chosen fromf 850 national and international artists. The festival is showcased around around City Hall and Hermann Square on the streets of Walker, Bagby and McKinney, as well as Sam Houston Park. Information: 713.521.0133 or www.bayoucityartfestival.com

The Kingwood Women's Club **13th Annual Holiday Marketplace** is Tuesday, Oct. 27, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Humble Civic Center. Shopping and lunch by Carrabba's (11 a.m. to 2 p.m.) is $25; general admission is $7. Information and tickets: 281.540.9346 or kwcweb@aol.com.

The Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Drive, presents **ArBOOretum**, a great way for your family to enjoy Halloween festivities in a natural environment. The event is Saturday, Oct. 24 from noon to 4 p.m. Children and grown-ups alike are encouraged to wear costumes and participate in the Costume Parade at 1 and 3 p.m. Admission is $15 for ages 3 and up.Information: www.houstonarboretum.org.

classes

The MFAH's **Antiques 101 History Camp for Adults at Bayou Bend** on Wednesday evenings in October from 6-9 p.m. focuses on 18th century lifestyles in America. Lectures include a light supper. Topics: Oct. 7, Dressing and Eating; Oct. 14, Skills and Knowledge; Oct. 21, Tea Party, Oct. 28, A Social Life. Cost is $175 for the series; $60 for individual classes. Information: 713.639.7769 or www.mfah.org/bayoubend.

Fall classes at **Arbor Gate**, 15635 FM 2920 Road, Tomball: Learn How to Grow Greens with Jeremy Kollaus, Oct. 6, 10 a.m.; Fall Arrangements with Cynthia Rogers, class fee $125, Oct. 8, 10 a.m.; Native Plants with Jason McKenzie of Pineywood Native Plants, Oct. 10, 10 a.m.; Garden Totems with Angela Chandler, Oct. 11, 11 a.m.; How to Select and Place Trees with arborist John Warner, Oct. 15, 10 a.m.; Southern Heirloom Bulbs with Chris Wiesinger, Oct. 17, 10 a.m.; Attracting Bluebirds to Southern Gardens with Linda Crum, Oct. 27, 10 a.m. More classes and information: 281.351.8851.

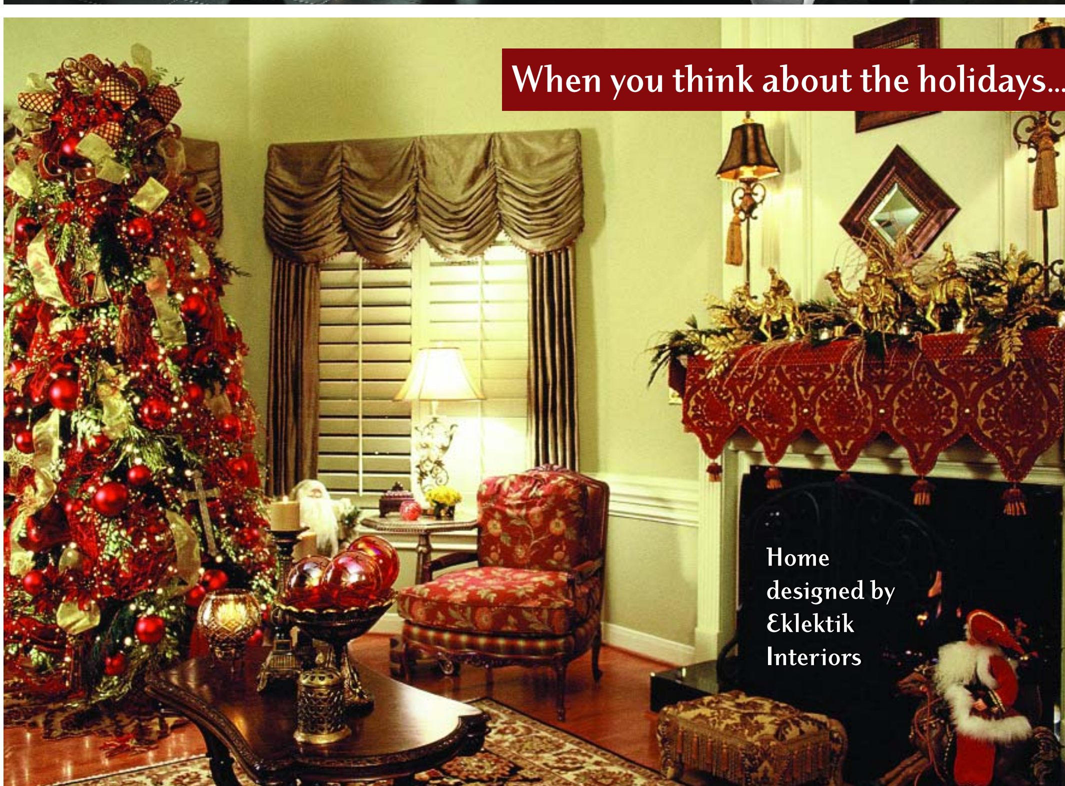
omission

In our August '09 cover story, "Belgian Style in West U," we inadvertently left out the name of the builder of the beautiful home owned by Sally and Mark Wheat: Beau Whiteford of **Belmont Custom Homes**, 3210 Rosemary Park Lane (713.784.4488) has been building fine homes in Houston and the West University area for more than 20 years.

what's new

The Wood 100 Report which ranks the fastest growing woodworking companies in America recently rated **Space Man Home & Office** #27 in the nation for outstanding sales growth performance, up from #88 last year. Houston-based SpaceMan Home & Office specializes in the design, manufacture and installation of superior closet, home office, wall beds and garage systems.





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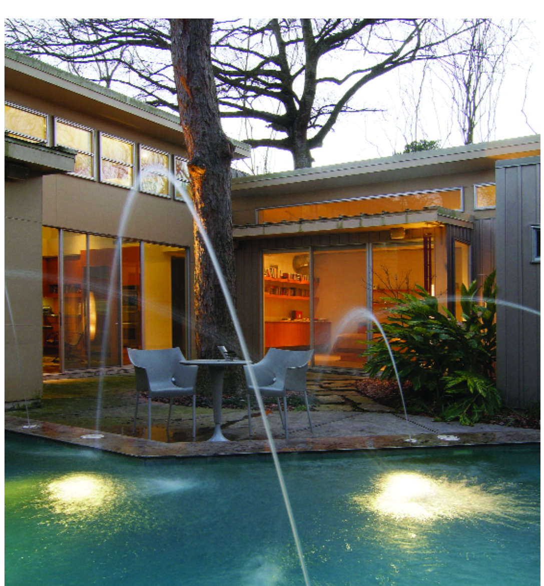


Winterizing Your Home, Houston Style

A to-do list for the cooler months

By **DEBI BRYANT**

ABOVE: For energy efficiency, consider a tankless hot water heater like this GE indoor tankless water heater.



RIGHT: If you don't use your pool in the winter months, cover it to keep out leaves and debris. Photo by Miro Dvorscak

The cooler months—they are almost here. Now is the time to start lining up projects to ready your home and landscape for winter. We've polled our experts and gathered together some ideas to help get you started:

WINTERIZE YOUR HOT WATER HEATER.

If you have a tankless hot water heater, you're in luck. Tom Massimin, owner of Hot Water Guys, says, "You really have nothing to do. Most tankless heaters have built-in freeze protection down to minus five degrees." For hot water heaters with tanks, keep an eye on weather reports of freezing, especially if the tank is outside. "If you're worried that the tank might freeze, you can drain it," he says, "but if it's electric, be sure to turn off the electricity before you do."

PREPARE YOUR SWIMMING POOL.

Paula Asbun, owner of Reality Pools, advises, "The pool plumbing fixtures should be covered if there's a threat of a freeze." She also encourages people who don't use their pool in the winter months to cover it to keep out leaves and debris. Also, she reminds pool owners to continue with the regular chemical treatments. "You still want to maintain the water chemistry even if you're not using it," she says.


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LEFT: Keep your fireplace flues clean—have them swept after two cords of word have been burned.

SWEEP THE CHIMNEY.
Schedule a professional chimney cleaning based on the amount of wood you burn. One rule of thumb is to clean the chimney after burning two cords of wood—however long that takes and, in our climate, it could be two years or ten. The Chimney Safety Institute of America suggests hiring a chimney sweep that is CSIA-certified.

IS IT TIME TO REPLACE WINDOWS?
If your windows are leaky or drafty, consider replacing them. An alternative is to use magnetic windows. Bob Heye, president of Mayeco Magnetic Windows, explains, "This technology, which was developed at M.I.T. during the Carter administration, makes the existing windows thermally energy efficient. The magnetic windows add an extra layer of insulation to your windows by using an air-tight magnetic seal which attaches an optical grade acrylic panel to the inside of your existing windows."

CHECK YOUR WEATHER-STRIPPING. Proper weather-stripping around doors and windows will keep your house warmer and reduce your energy costs. "Close the door and look for any light leaking through," says Heye. Doors require two types of weather-stripping—self-adhesive foam for the sides and tops, and sweeps along the bottom. Heye: "Check inside switch plates and outlet covers, too. You can insert insulation foam into cracks and then caulk around the covers."

LOOK OVER THE LANDSCAPE. Wes Hackney, landscape designer and owner of Texas Native Landscape, says, "Mulching is very important. It acts like a blanket for plant roots and it keeps much needed moisture available for the plants. Also, don't prune in the fall or winter. After pruning, most plants put out new growth. If it freezes, that tender new growth will most likely die."

INSPECT THE INSULATION IN THE ATTIC. A general guide is that your insulation should cover the ceiling joists which stand about 10-11 inches high. If the joists are showing through, consider adding more insulation.

DON'T FORGET THE A/C AND FURNACE.
Schedule your A/C and furnace to be checked by a professional. Bob Elolf, president of Environmental Air Systems, Inc., says, "Make sure your contractor is licensed and uses registered technicians." Elolf encourages consumers to hire contractors who belong to trade organizations such as Air Conditioning Contractors of America or Associated Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors of Texas.

BOTTOM LEFT: Andersen Windows & Doors' double hung windows give you extra insulation from temperature extremes.

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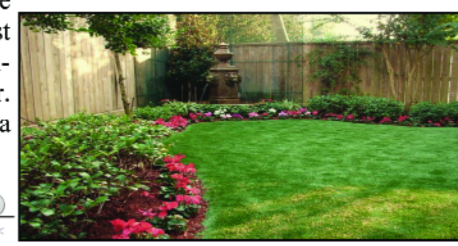
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ABOVE: For a warm and cozy house, have your furnace inspected and ready to go when the first Norther arrives. Photo courtesy Trane Heating & Cooling Division

And While You're At It...

The cooler months are a great time to clean your gutters, since clogged gutters can cause damage to the house. Be sure to check for any downspouts that have sprung leaks or become misaligned.

Now is also a good time to double-check your smoke detectors. Replace the batteries, as needed, or the entire smoke detector since fire officials advise that they need to be replaced every 10 years. Also, make sure your fire extinguisher is in place and operable.

Winterizing Your Second Home

If your winter schedule doesn't allow any time at your vacation home, here's a quick list of things to prepare it for some downtime:

• The experts recommend that for homes in high humidity areas it is best to leave the a/c or furnace on while you're away. It cuts down on mold and mildew.

• If you use a pest control company, make arrangements to continue that service—to avoid any infestations upon your return.

• Turn off the water at the main line since no one will be there to discover leaks.

• Clean out the refrigerator. Unplug it and prop open the door to give it a good airing.

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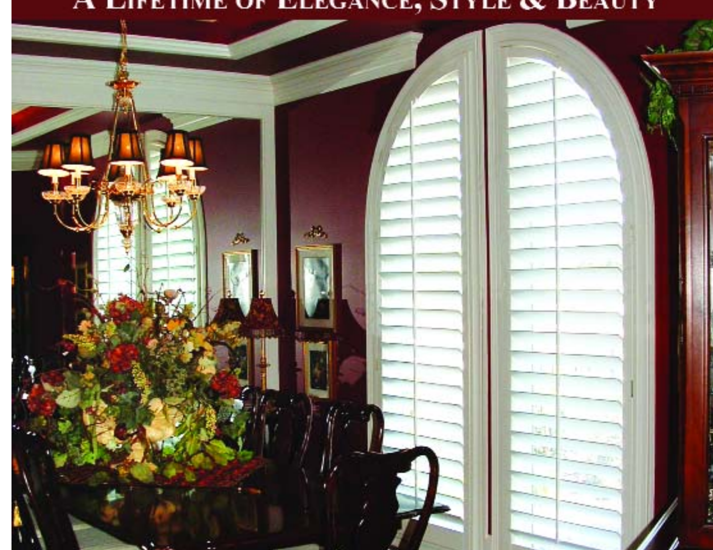








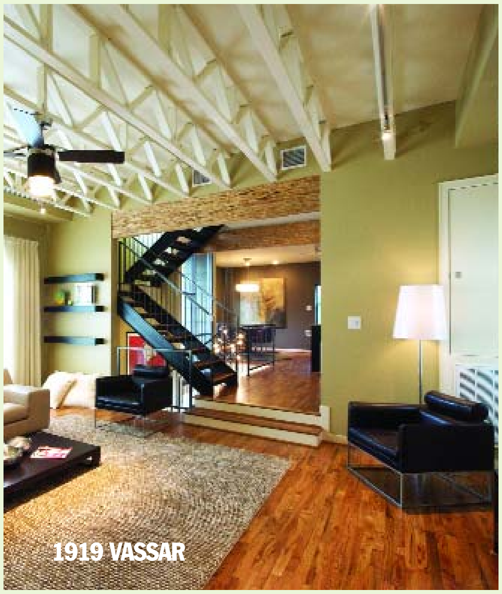




Twelve architect-designed houses will be open Oct. 10 and 11 from noon to 6 p.m. Tickets are $25 ($20 for bike riders) and may be purchased at any of the houses the day of the tour or at the AIA office, 315 Capitol, Suite 120 after October 5.

Sustainability, open floor plans, connection of indoors to outside, abundant light, and a mixture of modern and traditional materials mark the requirements that these homeowners gave their architects. Houses chosen for this year's tour showcase a variety of types including single family houses, town homes, and live-work places. Because of all of the tour sites are inside Loop 610, AIA is able this year to feature more than the usual number of houses for the same price. The townhomes and single family houses range in size from approximately 2,500 square feet to 6,000 square feet and from modest budgets to generous ones, demonstrating that excellence in design is not limited by size or dollars. The American Institute of Architects Houston is the professional organization for more than 1,800 architects and other design professionals in the greater Houston area. Information: 713.520.0155 or www.aiahouston.org.

American Institute of Architects Houston Home Tour, Oct. 10-11

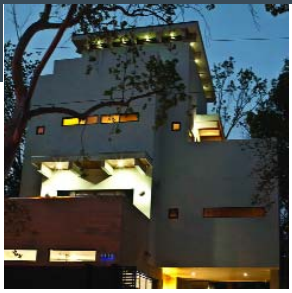

1919 VASSAR

5301 JACKSON
INTEXURE
This house in Houston's Museum District serves as a positive example of urban infill, keeping a compact footprint while maintaining views and open space. The house is LEED registered and expected to receive LEED Silver certification. Multiple balconies and terraces open the house to its private yard, views of Herman Park and Downtown Houston.

1919 VASSAR
STUDIO MET
This project explores the potential of a small lot on a one-way urban street. The lack of depth in the lot and the presence of a rear utility easement necessitated a vertical design solution. The two units of the duplex differ significantly in both plan and elevation, yet they share a simple material palette and formal language that creates a striking visual composition.

1625 HAROLD
ALLEN BIANCHI
Commissioned to be contemporary and fit in with the bungalows of the Montrose area, this house achieves continuity with its neighbors in its modest scale and materials with generous yard space around the house. Although designed in a modern manner, it uses elements typical of its craftsman style neighbors. The architect designed the house and gardens as a unified work.





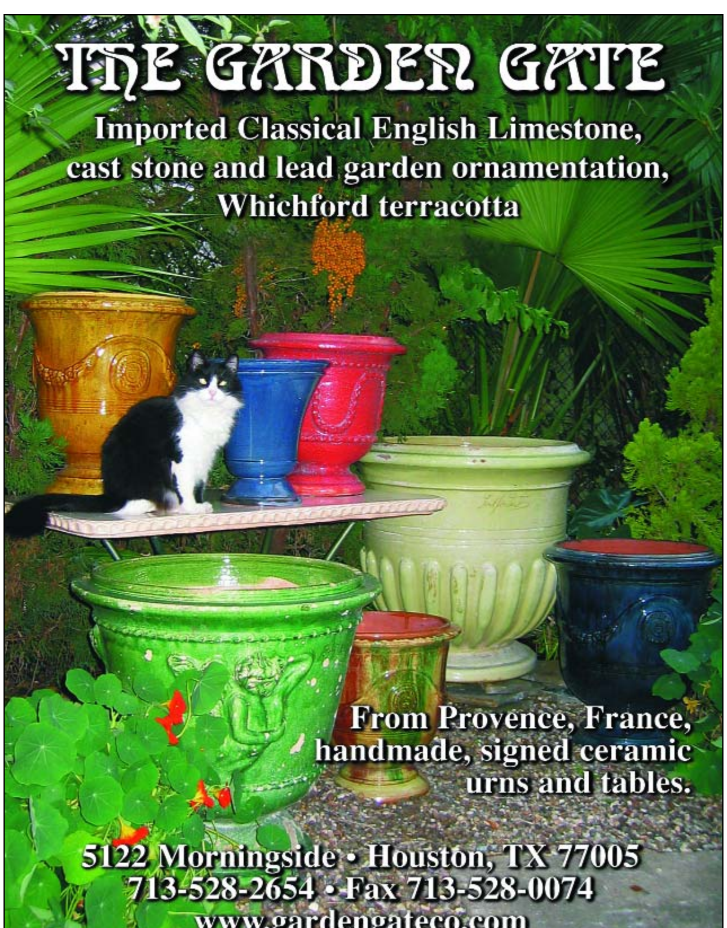
1116 WELCH
CITISCAPE
This house brought modern architecture into an awaiting-change conservative neighborhood. The architect worked with a difficult design challenge – to preserve all existing trees on property. The house's linear structure with a deliberately shifted center and multi-level overlapping terraces gives way to the trees and creates a unique rhythm in design at the same time.

2710 LOUISIANA
AS&D
The plan of this spacious 4,000 SF tri-level house is well suited for its tight urban lot. Simplicity of materials yields an elegant yet cost-effective solution that pairs the clients' accessibility requirements with their desire for a contemporary design that accommodates frequent entertaining. The rooftop garden with a striking view of downtown is the highlight of the house.

1210 W WEBSTER
COLLABORATIVE DESIGNWORKS
Situated on an underutilized infill lot, this house orchestrates a challenging mix of vehicular and pedestrian circulation through the narrow site with a series of strategically located volumes arranged in a Tetris-like manner. The resulting interplay of solid and void affords the residence multiple layered outdoor spaces, while opening up natural lighting opportunities with fragmented city views.


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home tours

1804 N MEMORIAL
MC2
The design for these townhouses establishes a dialogue between downtown high rises and single family residences of the historic Sixth Ward. The project is a series of interlocking volumes staggered to enhance views of downtown from the living rooms and master bedrooms and to create a scale that is compatible with the neighborhood.

728 E. 8TH
NATALYE APPEL + ASSOCIATES
Integration of indoors and outdoors in modern, open-plan spaces designed for Houston's climate was the goal for this 2,850 SF residence. From the main entry, through a lush side courtyard to the open stair against a glass back wall, the overall experience of the house is meant to provide constant connection with the environment.

4509 FEAGAN
STRASSER RAGNI
The premise of this adaptive reuse project is one of contrast. The outside, an unadorned clay block warehouse with a brick façade, hides an unexpected private world. Downstairs is a venue for entertaining. Industrial detailing and an exposed existing structure create a complex backdrop for brightly colored massing, art and furniture. A new two-story tower houses private living quarters where, by contrast, the smooth white walls are unadorned by art.








309 GLENWOOD
HOLLENBECK ARCHITECTS
This 6,500 SF house was designed for a sloped site where a narrow lot front expands outward. The main living area has an open design. The indoor living room and covered outdoor living area are joined by a series of 10' tall glass doors that amplify the expanse of the lot. The slope of the site allows for a uniquely situated infinity edge pool.

2127 TROON
JAY BAKER ARCHITECTS
The client lived on this site for 27 years but wanted a new house without abandoning the property, with its wooded esplanade and dramatic topography. The house has two wings with a transparent foyer between, providing unfolding views a garden that cannot be anticipated from the street. Accommodation of items from the original house, including antique doors, gates and screens, were incorporated in the new design.

3319 VIRGINIA
ADAMS ARCHITECTS
The clients wanted a residence that thoroughly employed and clearly expressed sustainable design ideas. 140 photovoltaic panels comprise the south and west solar arrays, shading the residence's roof, making the structure a net exporter of electrical power. Roof planes funnel total rain water recovery to a 7,000 gallon underground cistern and accomplish water self-sufficiency. Complete geothermal HVAC adds the third major strategy that will achieve LEED platinum certification.

Galveston's First
EAST END GARDEN TOUR
Oct. 10-11



Galveston's first ever East End Garden tour is Oct. 10, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Oct. 11, noon to 4 p.m. Rain date Oct 17th-18th. Tickets are $7, available at downtown Galveston retailers: Antiques Warehouse, Big House Antiques, Collector's Gallery II, Island Relics, Hendley Market, J Bangle Gallery, Mod Coffee House, and Star Drugstore. *One of the gardens on tour was featured on House & Home's Sept. 09 cover.*

11th Annual
HISTORIC DOWNTOWN GALVESTON LOFTS TOUR
Nov. 14-15

Hurricane Ike derailed last year's tour, but downtown Galveston is coming back strong, as you will see in these homes. The tour includes eight beautifully decorated, privately owned loft homes plus four open houses located in newly renovated historic buildings downtown. Tour hours on Nov. 14 and 15 are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets may be purchased online at www.galveston.com.

Calmly Coordinated

By JOETTA MOULDEN • Photography by JANET LENZEN


After


Before

CLUTTER AND BARE BULBS IN THIS BATH/POWDER ROOM NEEDED TAMING

Sue and Bill first contacted me after seeing a makeover in Houston House & Home that reminded them of their own 1950 ranch house they had just remodeled.

Since we had successfully completed their family room makeover (Houston House & Home, April 2007, "Good As New"), and guest bedroom (Houston House & Home, August, 2008 "French Flair"), they were eager to begin work in their teenage daughter's bath/powder room.

Sue was at an impasse as to what colors to paint the walls and cabinets, so we got right to work. "The room had to be multipurpose, to not have

a teenager's décor," she explains. "My husband loves striking colors, so he had selected a costly-to-execute striped paint treatment that was too bold from the start but we lived with it for a year before he confessed he did not like it anymore and was ready for a change." That's when they called me for help. They had a $1,500 budget to update the bathroom.

Storage was not an issue in the space, but the light pinkish maple cabinets did not coordinate with the chestnut-brown kitchen cabinets down the hall. I suggested wall and cabinet colors which were tones of the same colors in the tile and toile fabric I selected from Sue's "fabric closet." She admits she does not see the nuances of colors and says coordinating color is her biggest difficulty when decorating.

Walls were first textured with joint compound, which was troweled on, primed with latex wall primer, and painted with Sherwin-Williams' "Nomadic Desert" SW 6107. Trim and cabinets were painted with Sherwin-Williams' "Hopsack" SW 6109 enamel.

tip› If you stay on the same paint strip, colors will blend naturally to create smooth color flow. Also, hold the paint strip up against trim and walls in other rooms to make sure the color is "happy" with other paints.

Before

The bones of this teenage daughter's combination bath/powder room were great. The color needed tweaking, though, and the room lacked a rug and artwork needed better placement. A broken Roman shade and mismatched hardware (including a curved, protruding shower rod) had to be fixed.

After

A new rug from Great Rug Company softened the tile floor. Darker trim and neutral wall paint tied the colors together with the antique stool and existing chandelier. Artwork was rearranged and new hardware unified the room and made the tub area more spacious.

Sue found oil rubbed bronze knobs and pulls she liked at www.knobs4less.com and a new matching shower rod at Tuesday Morning. She had the Hunter Douglas woven wood Roman shade, which provides privacy and allows light in, in another closet, along with the clip-on shades for the sconces, which came from Home Depot. My seamstress fabricated the toile shower curtain using Sue's existing fabric.

tip› One larger area rug looks better than two or three smaller "dotty" rugs scattered about the room.

After measuring carefully, I determined that a 4- by 6-foot rug would fill the bath space perfectly. After I gave her specific guidance for shopping, Sue found the perfect traditional rug at Great Rug Company. I suggested she take the antique piano stool, the paint colors, toile fabric and a sample of the tile and granite with her shopping.

tip› When shopping, take as many fabrics, tiles, paint chips and other samples with you and literally place them atop what you are shopping for to make sure it works with your existing furnishings.

Although Sue knows the colors she likes, she likes to have design guidance to crease a cohesive, stylish look. The couple was pleased that I provided them the ▶



names of reliable sources, and they say they felt like this saved them both time and money.

They were able to accomplish all the changes within their $1,500 budget and the updates created the room they desired. "The changes were huge, but not expensive," she explains.

tip› **By repurposing lampshades, an existing window treatment plus toile fabric, the couple saved money, going "green" in the process.**

After

The owner already had most of the fixes in closets, including the toile fabric, which was made into a shower curtain, the Roman shade and clip-on lampshades. The new hardware and shower rod were replaced and are now consistent with the oil rubbed bronze faucet set. The cabinets and trim were painted a darker neutral and the walls were textured and neutralized.



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Shelterstyle.com holds a "Pages of Happiness" rating and, for the third consecutive year, a "Super Service Award" presented to 5 percent of companies that achieve and maintain a superior rating on www.angieslist.com.

trade secrets

Think "green". Rethinking existing furnishings keeps them out of the landfill and repurposes them. Donate unused items to charity.

To ensure color flow, **"walk" the paint colors and fabrics you are considering** around the house to make sure all the colors are "happy" together.

Sometimes the most effective strategy is **not to buy more furniture and accessories** for your home, but to **first rethink the pieces that are already paid for.**



Before

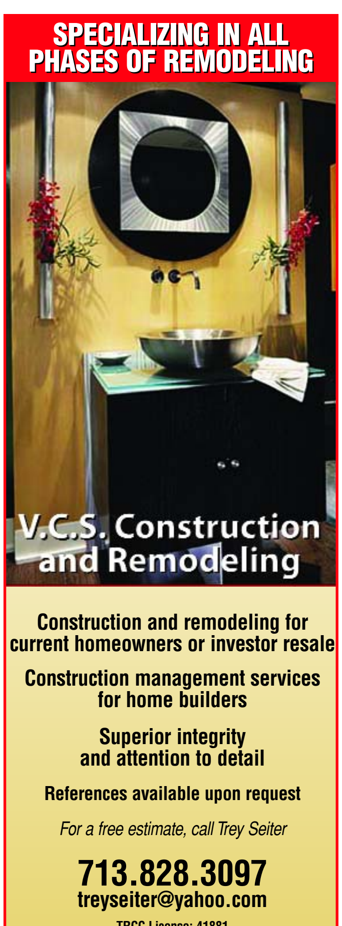
A too-colorful striped wall paint treatment, glaring bare sconce light bulbs and mismatched brushed nickel curved shower rod detracted from a wonderful room.

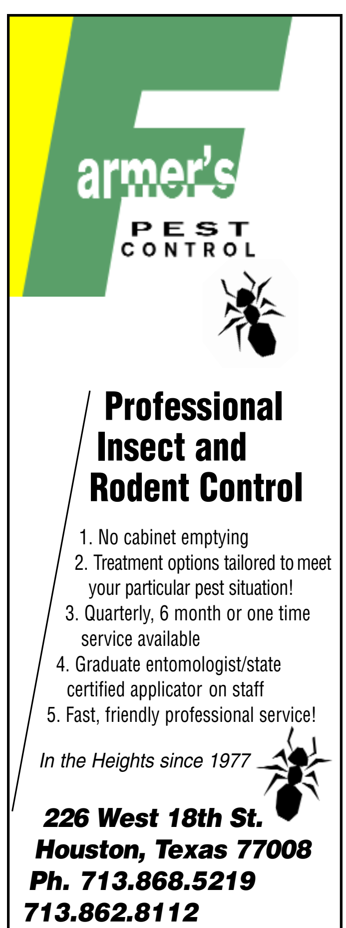
After

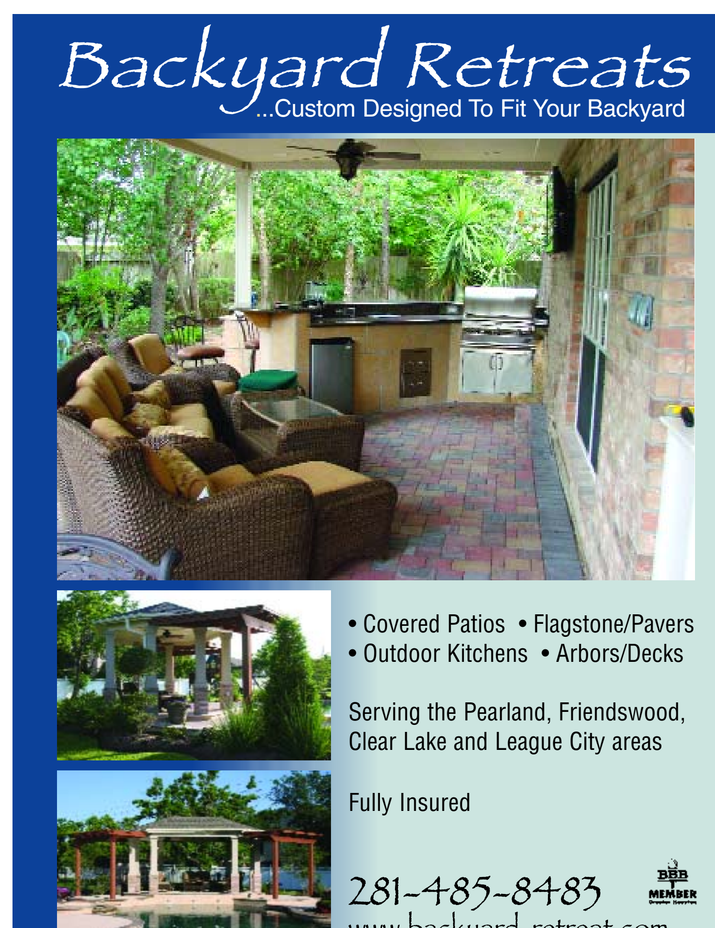
Sheetrock walls were painted a neutral color to flow with the rest of the house. They were dressed with a stucco finish, achieved with joint compound and a trowel. Antique vases and sconces add the owners' personality to the space.


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MODERN MELD

INDOORS AND OUTDOORS BECOME ONE IN THIS LUMINOUS LIGHTBOX OF A HOUSE IN THE HEIGHTS

By **LINDA BARTH**
Photography by **RALPH SMITH**



Great care was taken to make the front of the house fit in with its Heights neighbors. A front porch, deep eaves with brackets and exposed rafter tails echo the Craftsman details seen in nearby homes. The front elevation is broken into a 3-story portion and a 2-story portion so the scale of the house seems less sizable.



Architect Natalye Appel's design for the new Houston Heights home of Mark and Wanda Cohen is about connections.

The three-story 2,850 square-foot residence makes generous use of windows, balconies and porches to link indoors to outdoors at every opportunity.

Views from the generous north-facing windows at the front of the house visually connect the main living spaces on the second floor to the street. In return, the windows nudge soft, diffuse north light deep into the living, dining and kitchen areas.

At the rear of the house, the southern elevation is almost all glass, and long views toward the back of the garden merge indoors and outdoors so the house and garden seem as one. As you ascend the open stairway in front of the glass wall, views of Houston's treetops

At the entry to the house, landscape designer Rita Hodge arranged paving materials and plants to help signal that the door seen in the foreground by the porch light is the main entry. Toward the front gate, sliding glass doors allow entry to a two-bedroom guest suite.



This south-facing elevation seen from the backyard is mostly glass to catch views of the garden and neighborhood beyond. The porte cochere functions as driveway and entertainment space (see fireplace in concrete wall at right. When mature, the river birches in foreground will shade the second-story balcony.

join the house visually to its immediate neighborhood, and on the third floor, views of downtown connect the house with its urban setting.

Ample porches and balconies provide plenty of transitional outdoor space for outdoor living. A large breezeway on the east side of the house serves as a modern version of the porte cochere seen in many Heights houses from the 1920s and '30s. It functions as a driveway for the owners' cars, but can double as space for entertaining. A fireplace in one wall of this breezeway provides a cozy spot for relaxing outdoors in cooler weather.

A lush but orderly landscape by Rita Hodge of rHfactor draws the eye toward outdoor vistas of tropical gingers, bougainvillea, bamboo, colorful grasses and various paved surfaces arranged in crisp, geometric patterns.

Interior finishes chosen by designer Jane Schwarz bring the outdoors in through the use of warm colors, natural textures and warm woods such as maple-faced plywood cabinetry and a rustic oversized dining table custom-made of tamarind wood.

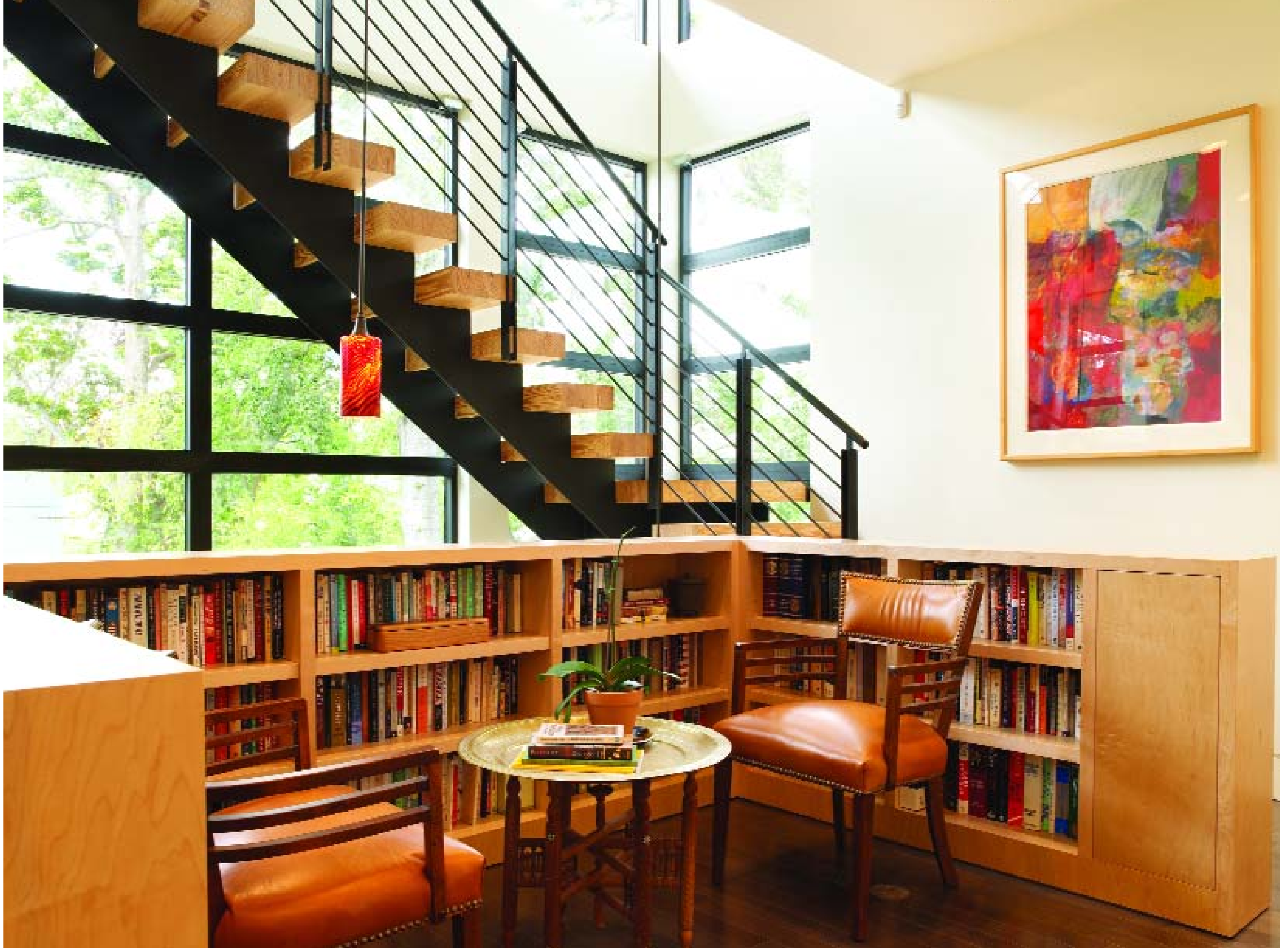
While thoroughly modern in spirit and style, the house looks

like it fits in the Heights neighborhood, thanks to the architects' awareness of the existing vernacular architecture and their skill at adapting the Cohen's house details to it.

"The details come together without copying them," says Appel. "We tried to be respectful but not in a copycat sort of way."

"We spent a lot of time looking at the front elevation, giving it the same feeling as the neighborhood," says Stuart Smith, project architect. Deep roof eaves with brackets and exposed rafter tails echo the Craftsman-like details seen in the vintage houses nearby.

The house is one of 12 on tour during the American Institute of Architecture Home Tour Oct. 10-11. See Page 34 for more information.



"The little perch," is what Wanda Cohen calls the library near the kitchen. "Wanda wanted a place where she could sit, have coffee, read the newspaper and look out over the beautiful plants outside," says Stuart Smith, project architect."She wanted it open but cozy."

Below: Designer Jane Schwarz found the boldly patterned granite at Arizona Tile & Granite. The room's color palette keys off the granite. The kitchen allows the homeowners to cook and visit with guests; a hall by the oven leads to a storage and clean-up room with dishwasher.



HOW THE HOUSE CAME TO BE

Attorneys Mark and Wanda Cohen, originally from Boston, had been living in Kingswood for 27 years in a two-story house on a large lot that had 45 trees on it. When their two sons grew up and moved away from home, the couple decided they wanted in a smaller house closer to downtown Houston.

»



The loft-like dining room needed a dramatic table and chandelier to fit the scale of the room. Pamela Halverson of Texas Tuscan Furniture was commissioned to build the wide table top in tamarind wood. The chandelier of bamboo and capiz shell is from a shop on 19th St. in the Heights, Eclectic Home.

For their new house, "We wanted to be in the house and be together—we wanted to be able to share each other's company," Wanda says. A new house with an open concept design for the main living area would give them the space to cook or read and still be together in one large room.

They bought a lot in the Heights hoping it might have a view of downtown and began interviewing architects, six or seven of them. Then they met Appel and her team. "At lunch, we fell in love," says Wanda. "She listens, quickly turns ideas around, takes your information and transforms it into something concrete in your house."

Appel and Smith began the design process with a series of open-ended conversations with the Cohens about how they liked to live. The couple love to entertain and wanted plenty of outdoor living space for entertaining. "One of the first things they did," Appel recalls, "was have us come out to their place in Kingwood, and they fed us multiple courses of delicious food. They both cook. It was great."

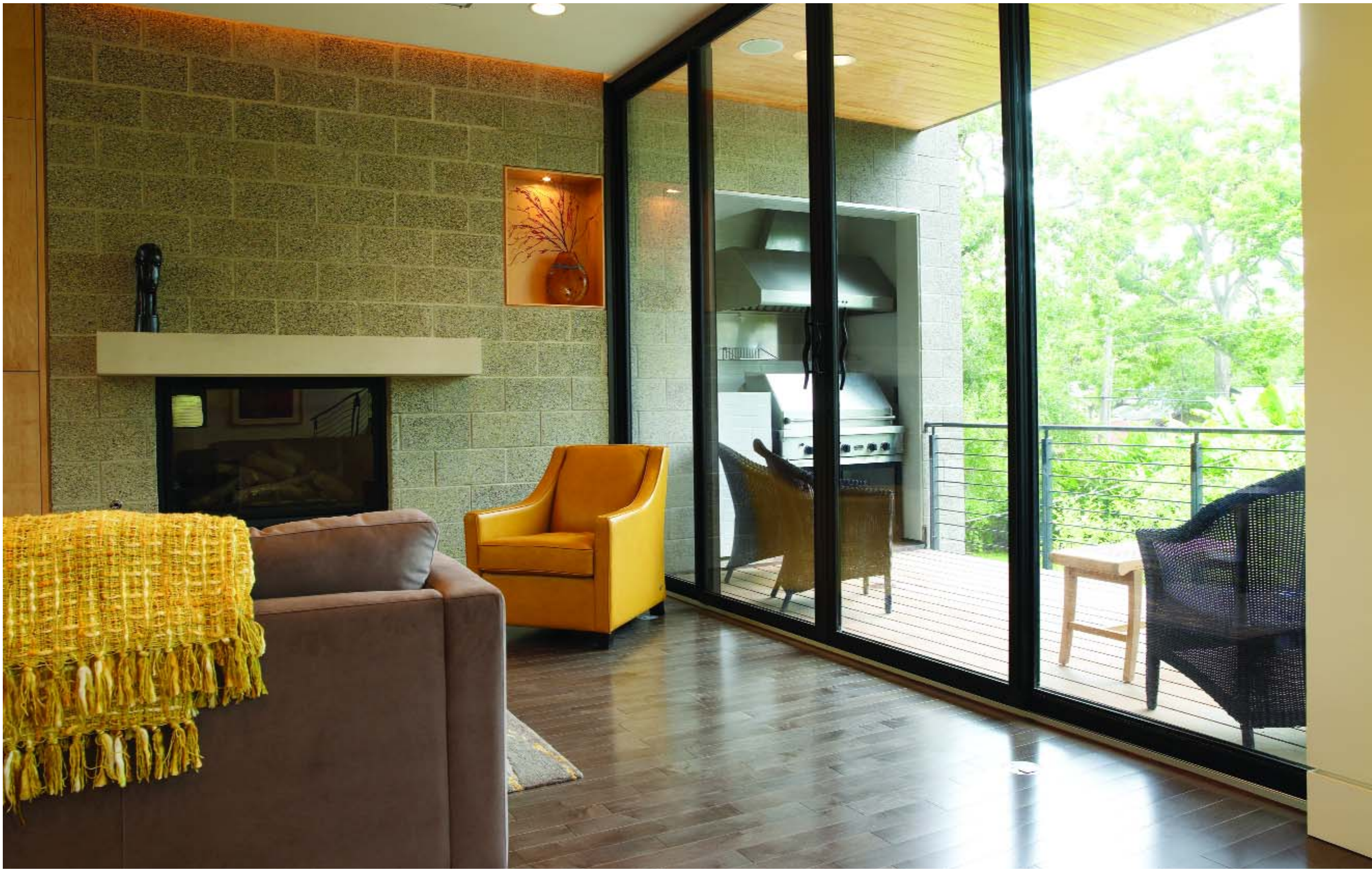
Early on in the site investigations, the question arose whether to build a third story on the new house. Wanda was convinced there was a downtown skyline view. Appel and Smith suggested the Cohens hire a cherry picker crane to lift them up to the level that would be the third floor and make sure it was worth building that high. "We had the best time," Wanda recalls. "This guy came with this huge machine, took us up 40 feet off the ground and it was the most awesome view. A storm was coming in from the southwest. I felt like I was in Peter Pan—rooftops, chimneys, green trees. It was so great. We were satisfied it was going to work."

Today, their master bedroom and balcony on the third floor enjoy a fine view of downtown Houston, especially in winter when the trees have shed their leaves.

COMPLETING THE PLAN

Eimar Virkus of Virkus Construction was hired as builder. Among Houston architects, he is known for his precision in keeping lines plumb and true, especially important in modern houses that don't use molding and trim that cover gaps where ceiling and wall fail to meet.

With construction underway, thoughts turned to landscaping.



The living room's sofa and chairs are from to-the-trade Contempo Designs; the pre-finished gray floor is by Manchester Carpet. The fireplace wall's concrete masonry is the same block used on the exterior of the house. "The materials inside were meant to be a carry-through from the outside," says Appel.

Wanda was worried she would miss the backyard retreat she had created in Kingwood. The family room of her house there had extensive views of the backyard. "I was a little concerned about losing something important to me," she says, "about losing access to nature and whatever is going on in the yard. But Natalye created the space precisely so we have that. If you stand almost in any room in the house you can either see the sky, which is really cool, or the garden."

Appel suggested the names of several landscape designers, and the Cohens chose Rita Hodge of rHfactor. "Rita has done a great job with bamboos and placement of trees so we essentially have an indoor/outdoor garden," Wanda says.

"I try to respond to the architecture," Hodge says. "To me this home is all about bringing the outside in, but it's also about a certain amount of order. [The Cohens] like organization, they like clean. That's why all the gravel." The gravel also allows percolation of rainwater into the ground. For pavers in the backyard, Hodge found Pennsylvania lilac flagstone that she thought would complement the colors of the house beautifully.

To screen the backyard fence, Hodge brought in pine trees to remind the Cohens of Kingwood and also because pine trees create a fast-growing evergreen screen.

For one plant bed, Hodge chose a forest pansy redbud that blooms maroon in spring. "It s a variety I like to use, " she says. "it will give a nice touch of color back here."

For additional color along one garden wall in the back yard, Hodge planted three shrubs of bougainvillea 'Rosenka.' "These bougainvillea look like that shimmery silk that has two colors of reds," Hodge says. "It's peachy and rosy and it's going to be lovely."

At the front of the house, three rows of grasses—ginger, miscanthus and purple fountain grass-- provide a colorful landscape that won't need mowing. Two street trees, Roman red maples, Aster drummondii, contribute to the neighborhood greenscape and may provide color in years with an early cold snap.

INTERIORS

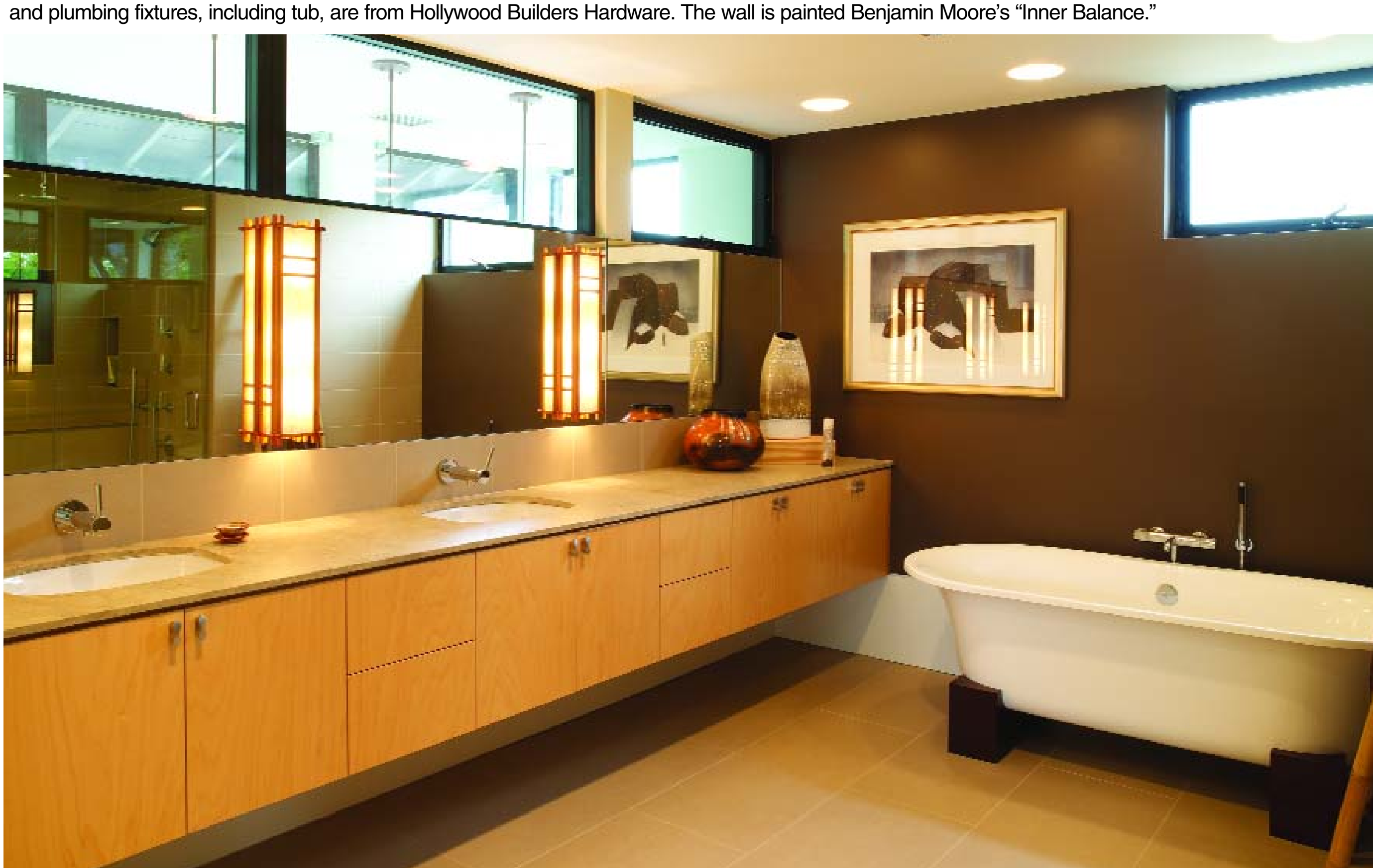
Jane Schwarz was brought into the project early on, and one of

»



The master bedroom on the third floor has a commanding view of the neighborhood and downtown Houston. Schwarz chose Benjamin Moore's "Salsa Dancing" for the wall, which keys off the homeowners' painting. The bedspread is washable 120-inch wide Egyptian cotton from to-the-trade Home Treasures.

Natural light from the stairwell illuminates the master bath. Cabinetry is by Virkus Construction, tile is by Lenova Tile, light fixtures are by Hubbardton Forge and plumbing fixtures, including tub, are from Hollywood Builders Hardware. The wall is painted Benjamin Moore's "Inner Balance."



the first finishes she chose for the house was the granite countertop in a bold pattern of swirling grays, golds and reds. That countertop and the Cohens' art collection determined the color palette for the house.

"After we picked the granite, we knew we wanted gray floors," says Schwarz, who found a pre-finished gray wood floor by Manchester Carpet that worked well with the stone.

Before the slab for the house was even poured, Schwarz found the chandelier for the dining room at Eclectic Home on 19th St. in the Heights. "That's my favorite store in Houston," she says. "I walked in, saw the chandelier, called Wanda and said, 'You need to go to Eclectic Home and look at the chandelier.' She said, 'I just left there.' I said, 'Go back and look up this time.'" She did and loved the oversized bamboo and capiz shell chandelier which is now the focal point for the second-floor living and dining area.

A loft-like space with a double-high ceiling, the dining area needed a large table. "Because they do a lot of entertaining and it's a large space, we needed a table almost as wide as it was long." Pam Halverson of Texas Tuscan Furniture created the tamarind-wood tabletop, and Schwarz's husband, metal sculptor Chuck Schwarz, made the metal base for the table.

Schwarz keyed all wall colors to the art that would hang in the room. "All art looks better against a color than it does against a white wall," she says. "If you go to a museum, they'll have a peach room, a gray room and blue room." All paints chosen for the house are Benjamin Moore.

Schwarz used some of the Cohens' existing furniture throughout and added a few piece to enhance the eclectic mix. Paintings, sculpture and textiles from the couple's travels infuse the home with their personality and spirit.

THE RESULTS

The Cohens found the experience of working with the architects and designers rewarding and pleasurable. "The space was shaped in ways you never really expected," Mark says. "It's what we asked for but they did it in ways we could never anticipate. Mere mortals can't do this," he says, half-joking. "Don't try this at home."

In the end, it's the way the house captures light that most pleases Mark and Wanda. "The light is something that lends a real special feel to the interior on all three levels," says Mark. "It's remarkable to be there during the day and see all the different shades and tones, the interplay of shadows and lines. It's a big volume, and people wonder sometimes what makes it so attractive. It's the character of the light inside."



In the backyard, the carport wall awaits a water sculpture by Houston artist Tim Glover. The gravel is black star basalt; pavers are Pennsylvania lilac flagstone. The zoysia grass in the sitting area is silky underfoot and only needs to be clipped once or twice a year.

RESOURCES

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PROJECT ARCHITECT
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What was once a designers' sidewalk sale has evolved into a pleasant, one-day-only tented outdoor market in a grassy field near the Heights. And the bargains are irresistible.

By **LINDA BARTH**



The Urban Market Houston, Nov. 8





The Urban Market began five years ago in the Heights as a sidewalk sale where interior designers and dealers of antiques, collectibles and fabrics could get rid of excess inventory. Maybe they'd taken things to Round Top Antiques market that didn't sell, or they had a new shipment coming in and they needed room for the new things. Maybe a designer had over-ordered fabric for a client, or the client changed his/her mind. Designers and dealers welcomed the opportunity to clear some space in their studios and shops, plus offer fine things at excellent prices.

Market co-founders Maura Cannon and Jane Schott added dealers, expanded the market and ultimately moved it to the fields outside the Knights of Columbus hall at 607 E. Whitney Drive near the Heights. By last spring, the market had grown so large, it needed to become a full-time business venture rather than a sideline event to survive and thrive.
Jackie Sharbrough, a dealer who sells antiques at Antiques and Interiors on Dunlavy, stepped up to the plate. "When the Urban Market started, I would go with friends, and I thought it was the greatest thing ever," Sharbrough recalls. She approached the owners. "We can't let this go away," she told them. "It's too wonderful." Discussions ensued and within a week, Sharbrough was the new owner, thrilled to be able to continue the event, which is now held three times a year.



ABOVE: Jackie Sharbrough of The Urban Market Houston

Most of the same dealers from the spring market will be at the fall market on Nov. 8. About half the dealers are from Houston, Sharbrough estimates; another 45 percent are from other Texas locales. Among the dozens of purveyors are: Houston interior designer Ginger Barber; retailer Suzanne Duin of Maison Maison; Jon Goodling of Gallery Auctions bringing Mid-Century furniture finds; Linda Marcov of Willow Nest in Burton, Tex. with vintage garden antiques, and Susan Skinner and Hector Vasquez of Fundustrial with industrial metal furnishings and lab equipment.

The Knights of Columbus will sell barbecue. Various farmers' market vendors will offer foods, including Janice Schindeler of Words & Food with pimiento cheese sandwiches and humus dips, Angela's Bakery with croissants and scones, and Katz's coffee.

A sentimental favorite of market-goers, Golden Beginnings Golden Retriever Rescue will have some dogs on site available for adoption.

The Urban Market Houston, 607 E. Whitney Drive, Houston
The Knights of Columbus Fields near the Heights
Sunday, Nov. 8, 9 a. m. to 4 p.m.
Free parking, enter parking lot at Oxford Street
Admission $5; children and dogs free
Information: www.theurbanmarkethouston.com


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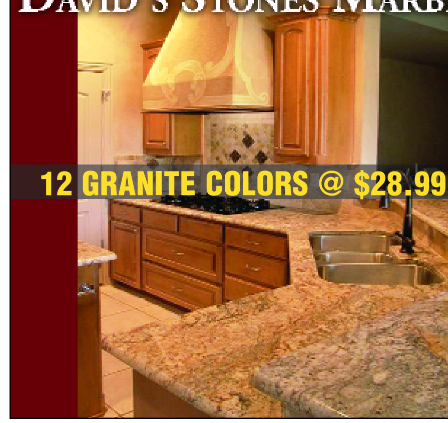
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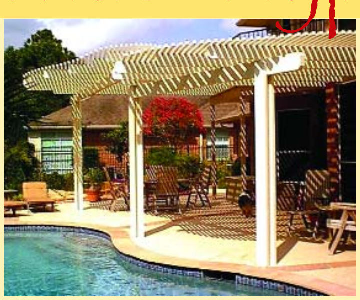
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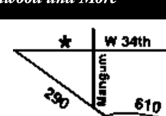
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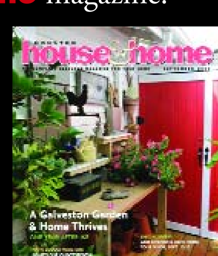
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City of Kemah with Arbor Antiques Present

Antiques By the Bay

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November 5 through November 8, 2009 • Between Highway 146 and Galveston Bay in the heart of Kemah, Texas
Premiere Night on Wednesday, November 4, 2009 6-10pm • Show Hours Daily 10 to 6

This fall the City of Kemah, Texas is launching its very first antique fair. Scheduled for the first weekend of November 2009, Antiques By the Bay will be a 4 day event bringing antique merchants and antiques lovers together in the quaint Galveston Bay village of Kemah.

To help build what the city hopes will become a week long event, Kemah has enlisted the services of veteran Round Top Show promoter Curtis Ann Davis, President of Arbor Antiques Services. Davis has a 12 acre show in Round Top and brings lots of experience to the helm of this project. Davis tells us that she is excited about helping Kemah build their event and her first order of business is to fill the tents with fabulous antiques and art. " Texas is a great place for "antiquing" and it is important to have the quality and variety of antiques that both designers and collectors appreciate and have come to expect. It is my goal to build on that standard of excellence at this show. We have already had lots of good response from antique dealers from Texas and surrounding states interested in doing the show. And, many of my Round Top east coast dealers have already committed as well. However, we want to fill to capacity and need more dealers".

Davis also adds, "Kemah already has so much to offer… it is home to the third largest recreational fleet in the USA , it has a Boardwalk and Amusement Area with regularly scheduled events and music, it has great restaurants and B&Bs; adding this annual antique event will put icing on the cake". Nestled on the bay between Houston and Galveston , Kemah has all the charm you would hope to find in a sleepy coastal village with close proximity to a thriving major city and a historical coastal island.

Antique Dealers interested in show space can contact Arbor Antiques at their home base in Alvin Texas by calling toll free 281-388-1075 or 888-233-5414, or by visiting the show website at www.antiquesbythebaykemah.com or by emailing curtisann@arborantiques.com.

For more information about Kemah visit www.kemah-tx.gov.




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gardening

Tulip Mania

By **DODIE JACKSON**

Go wild over tulips and other bulbs and flowering plants at the Garden Club of Houston's 67th Annual Bulb and Plant Mart, Oct. 8-10



ABOVE: Tulips look best planted in clumps. Photo courtesy Abbott-Ipsco Inc.



Daffodils, tulips and hyacinths say "spring." Their bulbs should be planted in early January. Photo courtesy Abbott-Ipco Inc.



Pink and red Impression tulips brighten a River Oaks sidewalk. Photo by Alice Thomas

The tulip, one of humankind's oldest cultivated flowers, originated in Turkey. Many have succumbed to its beauty, most notoriously the Dutch traders in 17th-century Holland where the climate was hospitable to tulip cultivation. Tulips became status symbols, and their rapidly rising prices caused feverish trading of tulip futures on local market exchanges. By 1636, one tulip could be worth today's equivalent of $76,000. Fortunes rose with the speculation of tulip prices and rarity of these glorious flowers. But few people were actually planting them; they were speculating on their future value, and in February 1637 the market collapsed.

Tulip mania is still with us, not in irrational exuberance over the bulbs' monetary value, but in our passion for these plants' beautiful blooms. Today the U.S. imports more than 30 billion tulip bulbs a year. Only France and Germany surpass the U. S. in imports of tulips bulbs.

One of the premier places to buy tulip bulbs in Texas is the Houston Garden Club's 67th Annual Bulb and Bulb and Plant Mart, Oct. 8-10 at Westminster United Methodist Church, 5801 San Felipe at Bering. Now in its 67th year, the Bulb and Plant Mart features the widest selection of top-quality bulbs from domestic and international suppliers plus an expanded collection of hard-to-find and unusual plants, perennials, trees, shrubs and vines. Many of the plants and bulbs are unique offerings from the gardens of Club members, grown specifically for the Mart. You'll find more than 500,000 bulbs, including 55 varieties of tulips, iris, amaryllis and Louisiana Irises.

In Houston, the most commonly grown tulips are the Darwin Hybrids. They come in a huge variety of colors and heights and are easily forced into bloom. They act as an annual in our climate, where in other parts of the U.S. they will naturalize. However, the Species tulip will naturalize in our growing zone and does not require any special handling. The Species tulip is much smaller than the Darwin Hybrid, but can be a lovely addition to your garden. Another strong performer in Houston is the cluisiana 'Trinka' which grows 6 to 7 inches tall and produces pointed rusty red petals with cream-colored edges.

The Darwin Hybrids, along with the Triumph and Single can be easily grown with a few helpful tips:

1) Buy only quality bulbs. They should be firm when squeezed.

2) Refrigerate the bulbs in a mesh bag or old panty hose. Do not put them in the freezer or the hydrator. Keep them away from fruits and vegetables.

3) Refrigerate for a minimum of 8 weeks.

4) Plant them in well draining soil in early January. They will bloom 40 days from planting.

5) They look best in clumps. Dig a hole 5 inches deep and place bulbs one inch to two inches apart. Cover bulbs with at least 2 inches of soil.

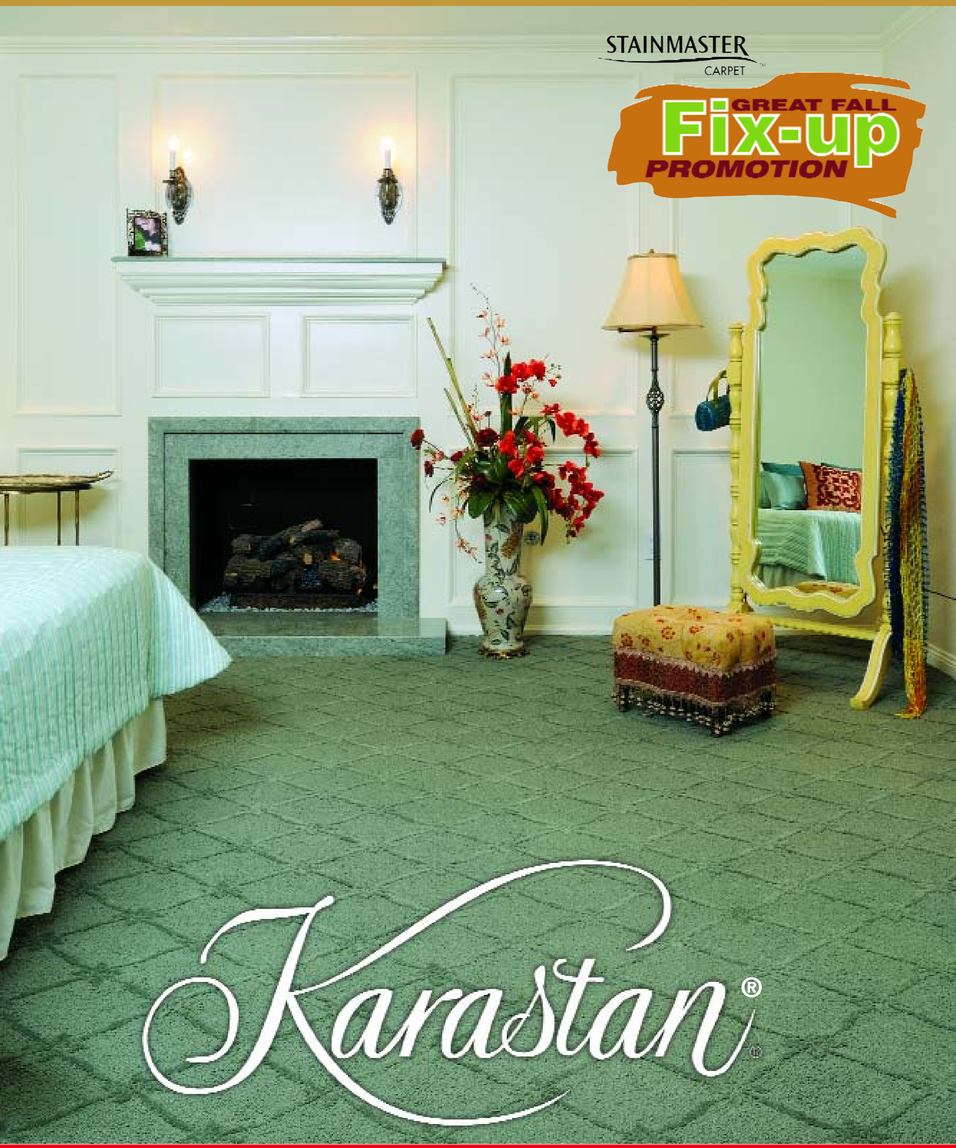
6) Plant in a location with early morning sun and afternoon shade. This helps keep them cool. They do not like heat. If we have one of our early heat waves, gently water them or put ice along the bases of the flowers.

Hours for the Plant and Bulb Mart are 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and Friday, Oct. 8 and 9, and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 10.
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